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II WND/9.1

SUMMARY RECORD OF FIRST MEETING OF QUADRIPARTITE
WORKING GROUP ON GERMANY AND BERLIN
JANUARY 25, 1960

Participants:

France

Mr. Laloy
Mr. Winkler

Germany

Mr. Krapf
Mr. Pauls
Mr. Osterheld

United Kingdom

Viscount Hood
Mr. Logan

United States

EUR - Mr. Kohler
GER - Mr. Rillanbrand
SOW - Mr. McSweeney
L/EUR - Mr. Kearney
GER - Mr. McKiernan
SOW - Mr. Dean

Defense - Col. Schofield

Mr. Kohler welcomed the participants, stating his belief that the work of the group might begin slowly but that it would probably pick up in momentum after the Foreign Ministers' Meeting of April 13-14. He said there were certain unclear points in the record of the Paris Western Summit; there had unfortunately been no official record. We did not plan to introduce many new papers at this time except one based on the principle of self-determination designed as a counter to Soviet emphasis on a peace treaty with both parts of Germany.

Mr. Laloy said he had no papers to present at the moment. It was the French estimate that at the summit the Soviets would again emphasize a peace treaty with "two German states" and their "free city" idea. We should perhaps follow the tactical line of asking the Soviets themselves to justify any change in the status of Berlin. The French Government was prepared to work out possible counter responses to Soviet tactics but no real change in Berlin and Germany was expected. If this were the case, the only possibility for the Western side would be to work out variations on earlier Western positions.

In reply to a question from Mr. Laloy as to working methods, Mr. Kohler said that we were willing to meet as often as desired and, if considered preferable, in sub-groups.

Viscount Hood

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Viscount Hood said that the United Kingdom had no new papers to present but that he thought a first task for the Quadripartite Group might be to look at the Western Peace Plan and determine how it might be revised or improved. In addition, we would have to go through the various tactical possibilities concerning Berlin once more, i.e., whether we should be willing to negotiate on Berlin alone and if so what our position should be.

Mr. Krapf gave a short analysis of the Soviet position on Berlin prepared by the German Foreign Office (circulated as II WMO/5.1). The paper emphasized the German belief that the Soviet leaders, while having as their long term objective the expulsion of the Western powers from Berlin, do not now wish to run the risk of war; while, on the other hand, a "Western failure" in Berlin would do great damage to the defense morale of the entire West.

Mr. Kohler asked what the German estimate would be in the event of breakdown of negotiations followed by conclusion of a separate Soviet peace treaty with Western Germany and a turn-over of access controls of Berlin to the East Germans and whether the Germans had considered the effect of this on contingency planning. In reply, Mr. Krapf said the German estimate was that Khrushchev would not go so far as to risk war.

Mr. Laloy stated that what Khrushchev did after the summit depended largely on what the West did at the summit. We should try to avoid letting the subject come to a breaking point. It was possible that limited agreement on disarmament or East-West relations could give Khrushchev a pretext or reason not to push the Berlin problem to its ultimate conclusion. Mr. Laloy suggested that the Quadripartite Group might prepare a refutation of Khrushchev's frequent comparison of a possible separate peace treaty with the Soviet Zone regime with what Khrushchev termed unilateral American conclusion of a peace treaty with Japan after the second World War.

Mr. Krapf pointed out that public opinion in the world should again be reminded who started the world crisis in Berlin. Mr. Krapf tabled a preliminary German paper on tactics on Germany and Berlin for the summit (distributed as II WMO/5.2) and noted that the German idea was based on starting the negotiations at a point away from the Geneva proposals of July 28, 1959 and then, if necessary, allowing the negotiations to come back to them as the final culmination. Mr. Krapf emphasized that July 28 proposals were considered by the Federal Republic as the ultimate limit of Western concessions on Berlin.

Mr. Laloy said that there was no great difference between the May and July proposals but at the same time we did not want to begin with the old proposals right at the start. We might begin by pointing out to the Soviets that they are the ones who desire to change the status quo, - the West did not. We have a workable situation at the moment and if they wish to change it they will have to advance some usable proposals of their own.

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In other words, we would dig in and wait to see what the Soviets brought forward on Berlin. A second possibility would be to insist with greater emphasis than previously on a solution of the Berlin question valid for the whole of Berlin. Such an approach would give more room for maneuver and establish the principle of reciprocity in dealings with the Soviets on Berlin. It was, in addition, an easily understood position.

Mr. Hillenbrand described a U.S. paper on the possibility of a plebiscite to be carried out in all parts of Germany, noting that it was based on a traditional Western principle of self-determination and that it could contain a choice of positions in favor of a peace treaty to be negotiated with an all-German government or for a peace treaty with the "two German states", or based on the choice between the Western Peace Plan and the Soviet peace treaty.

Mr. Leloy noted that the duration of the East-West summit and the limited time available for discussion of the separate subjects, which meant that we would have to take a different approach to preparations than that taken at the Geneva Foreign Ministers' Meeting. Examination in the working group of the Berlin and German questions must be thorough but the results necessarily short. These considerations added attraction to the German proposal advanced by Mr. Krapf for the establishment of some sort of machinery for continuation of negotiation on the Berlin question beyond the summit.

Summarizing, Mr. Kohler said that the immediate tasks of the working group would be to begin the review of the Western Peace Plan and the three papers which have been presented to the Group for its next meeting on the afternoon of January 27.

cc: U.S. Participants

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